

AN
HISTORICAL
GEOGRAPHY OF
IRAN

W. BARTHOLD

TRANSLATED BY
SVAT SOUCEK

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
C. E. BOSWORTH

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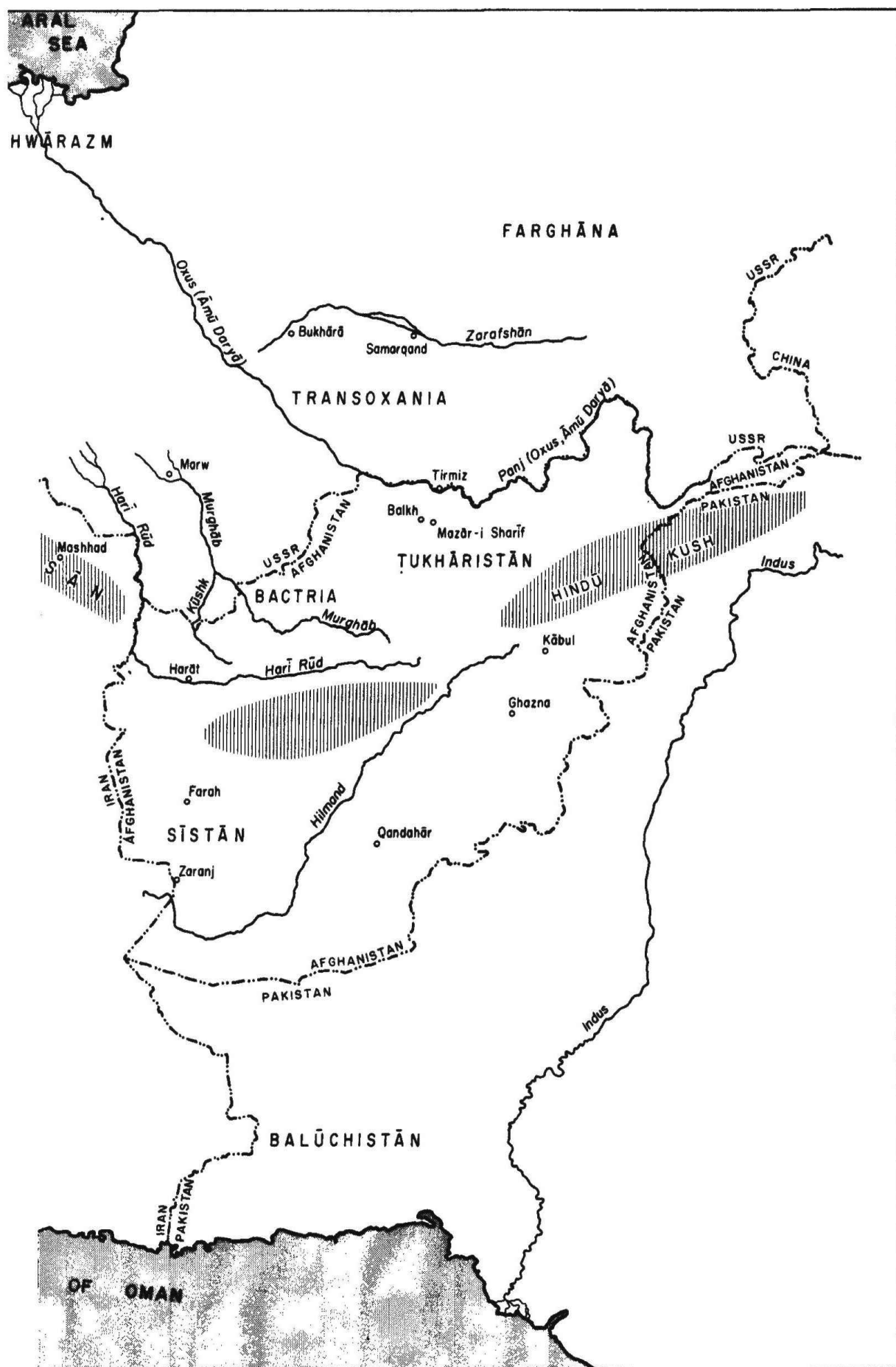
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
AGWG	<i>Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
AI	<i>Athār-é Irān</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AMI	<i>Archaeologische Mitteilungen aus Iran</i>
AN	<i>Akademiia Nauk</i>
ANVA	<i>Avhandlingar utgivet av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi, Oslo</i>
AO	<i>Acta Orientalia</i>
AOHung	<i>Acta Orientalia Hungarica</i>
AOr	<i>Archív Orientální</i>
APAW	<i>Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
BGA	<i>Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum</i>
BSO[A]S	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental [and African] Studies</i>
CAJ	<i>Central Asiatic Journal</i>
EI ¹	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1st edition</i>
EI ²	<i>Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition</i>
EW	<i>East and West</i>
Farhang	<i>Farhang-i jughrāfiyā-yi Irān</i>
GAL	<i>C. Brockelmann, Geschichte der arabischen Literatur</i>
GIPh	<i>W. Geiger and E. Kuhn, eds., Grundriss der iranischen Philologie</i>
GJ	<i>Geographical Journal</i>
GMS	<i>Gibb Memorial Series</i>
HJAS	<i>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies</i>
HOr	<i>Handbuch der Orientalistik</i>
IA	<i>Islām Ansiklopedisi</i>
IJ	<i>Indo-Iranian Journal</i>
IJMES	<i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>
IQ	<i>Islamic Quarterly</i>
Iran, JBIPS	<i>Iran, Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies</i>
Isl.	<i>Der Islam</i>
IUTAKÈ	<i>Trudy Iuzhno-Turkmenistanskoi arkheologicheskoi kompleksnoi èkspeditsii</i>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JA	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
JASB	<i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JRAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
JRCAS	<i>Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society</i>
JSFOu	<i>Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
MO	<i>Le Monde Oriental</i>
NGWG	<i>Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen</i>
NTS	<i>Norsk Tidsskrift for Sprogvidenskap</i>
OLZ	<i>Orientalistische Literaturzeitung</i>
OON	<i>Otdelenie obshchestvennykh nauk</i>
PRGS	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society</i>
PW	<i>Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
REI	<i>Revue des Études Islamiques</i>
RMM	<i>Revue du Monde Musulman</i>
SA	<i>Sovetskaia Arkheologiia</i>
SBAW Berlin	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Königlich. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
SBWAW	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Wien, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
SB Bayr. AW	<i>Sitzungsberichte der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu München, phil.-hist. Kl.</i>
Soch.	<i>V. V. Bartol'd, Sochineniia, Moscow, 1963-1977. 9 vols.</i>
SON	<i>Seriia obshchestvennykh nauk</i>
Survey of Persian Art	<i>A. U. Pope and P. A. Ackermann, eds. A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present. 6 vols. London and New York, 1938-1939.</i>
TPS	<i>Transactions of the Philological Society</i>
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZII	<i>Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik, Leipzig</i>
ZVORAO	<i>Zapiski Vostochnogo Otdeleniia Russkogo Arkheologicheskogo Obshchestva</i>







EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

No historian of the eastern Islamic world is unfamiliar with the works of Vasilii Vladimirovich Bartol'd (1869-1930), or Wilhelm Barthold, as his name was originally rendered in the Germano-Russian milieu into which he was born. His magnum opus, the work based on his St. Petersburg doctoral thesis, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*, appeared in English in the Gibb Memorial Series in 1928, and with an extra, hitherto unpublished chapter, again in 1968. The late Professor V. and Mrs. T. Minorsky performed a valuable service in 1958-1962 by translating as *Four Studies on the History of Central Asia* (in fact, five studies) Barthold's *A Short History of Turkestan*, *History of the Semirech'yé*, *Ulugh-Beg*, *Mir 'Alī Shīr*, and *A History of the Turkman People*. The lectures that Barthold gave in Turkish at Istanbul in 1926 are available in both German and French versions (*Zwölf Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Türken Mittelasiens*, 1935, and *Histoire des Turcs d'Asie Centrale*, 1945). A general work on Asian exploration and the evolution of oriental studies appeared in French in 1947, *La découverte de l'Asie, histoire de l'orientalisme en Europe et en Russie*. Various other lesser works have been translated into western languages and into Arabic, Persian, and Turkish; Barthold wrote certain of his articles in the language of his family background, German; and the large number of articles that he wrote for the first edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (many of them now updated and included in the new edition) are also widely available to the non-Russophone reader. But although the work of translation has gone on steadily in the half-century since Barthold's death, these works still represent only a small part of his total oeuvre, extending over some forty years; the *Collected Works (Sochineniia)* that appeared at Moscow between 1963 and 1977 (comprising ten parts in nine volumes) amount to over 7,000 large pages.

The stature of the man emerges from these bare statistics and the recounting of titles. The lands of eastern Islam, from Iran to Afghanistan and Central Asia, were Barthold's particular sphere of interest, and above all the latter, for the Russian advance into Central Asia during the later nineteenth century opened up for Russian scholars exciting possibilities of historical and archaeolog-

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ical investigation, whereas earlier European travelers to places like Khiva, Bukhara, and Samarqand had had to contend with capricious and barbaric local potentates who hardly observed the international conventions of behavior toward accredited diplomats, let alone toward free-lance travelers and researchers, figures of suspicion at the best of times. Barthold realized early in his scholarly career at the University of St. Petersburg, where he lectured from 1896 onward, that the investigation of the history, topography, and antiquities of Central Asia offered a field similar to that opened up in the Indian subcontinent in the late eighteenth century for British scholars. Barthold made almost annual field trips to Central Asia starting in 1893, undeterred by the fact that in that first year, on a journey to Semirechye, he broke his leg and had to return to Tashkent for medical treatment. In the 1920s, he was much in demand by the various Soviet republics that had by 1924 emerged in Central Asia after the final extinguishing of nationalist and separatist aspirations there, to write local histories and accounts of the different Turkish peoples of the republics. Both in the Tsarist period and after, Barthold was insistent that Russian officials, traders, soldiers, and so on working in Central Asia should busy themselves in their spare time with the study of the region, recognizing how much invaluable work had been done for our knowledge of Indian geography, society, and history by successive generations of devoted British administrators and soldiers.

Central Asia has always been at the receiving end of religious, cultural, and other influences, rather than being a spontaneously creative region, and it is this receptiveness to an assortment of outside civilizations—including those of China, India, the Middle East—that makes the study of Central Asia and the interaction of these strands such a fascinating one. It does, however, make stringent demands on the scholar who would devote himself to Inner Asia, not least in the matter of linguistic equipment; hence the rarity of the multilingual Marquarts and Pelliot. Barthold's concern was more particularly Islamic Central Asia, and his skills lay chiefly in the sphere of the three great Islamic languages, Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. He was an exacting philologist, fully cognizant of the truism not always appreciated today that without philological expertise the would-be specialist in the Middle East, or for that matter, in any part of Asia, is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Accompanying his *Turkestan* when it appeared in 1898-1900 was a volume of texts, most of them edited for the first time by Barthold from manuscripts bristling with linguistic problems

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and difficulties of interpretation; many of these texts, such as Gardīzī's *Zayn al-akhbār*, 'Awfi's *Jawāmi' al-ḥikāyāt*, and Isfizarī's *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, have since been published, but here, as in so many spheres, Barthold was the pioneer.

One of those great civilizations that have profoundly affected Central Asia is the Iranian, for out of Iran such faiths as Zoroastrianism, Manicheism, Nestorian Christianity, and most recently Islam have been mediated to the Asian heartland. If only because a knowledge of Iranian civilization was a necessary adjunct to the understanding of Central Asia, Barthold was bound to be attracted to the study of Iran, a land with which Russia had already long been in intimate political, military, and commercial contact. Two of his major works, indeed, deal with it, the one translated here, and *Iran, a Historical Survey*, and both will now be available in English (a translation of the latter appeared at Bombay in about 1939).

Barthold's basic attitude to history was, as Professor Yuri Bregel has pointed out in a perceptive study that should be read in conjunction with this present Introduction,¹ that of nineteenth-century German positivist historiography, with the evolution of mankind viewed as a convergence of originally distinct human societies through the diffusion of culturally more advanced societies to the less advanced. It was in the light of this process that he viewed such diverse phenomena as religion, the growth of world empires, the development of urban life, and the spread of international trade, and that he viewed with favor the *missions civilisatrices* of the imperial powers of his time, whether Britain in India and Africa or Russia in Central Asia, Siberia, and the Caucasus. It was, indeed, Barthold's intellectual support for the Imperial Russian mission in Central Asia (one whose positive achievements were appreciated at the time by outside observers such as Schuyler and Curzon) that eventually contributed to a fuller rehabilitation of his work in post-Stalinist Soviet Russia. For although Barthold, as a Russian patriot, had stayed on in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution, he gave no assent to Communism and regarded Marx as an unhistorical, unscientific figure whose ideas had no relevance for oriental studies; he had never become a nonperson in Soviet scholarship, but his works had been somewhat neglected or cited only selectively and misleadingly in some quarters, above all in the Central Asian Soviet Republics.

The Historical Geography of Iran is essentially an analytical and

¹ "Barthold and Modern Oriental Studies," *IJMES*, XII (1980), 385-403.

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descriptive work rather than an attempt at synthesis. Barthold was conscious of the backwardness of oriental studies in the identification and evaluation of the basic sources, compared with long-established disciplines such as classical studies and European literature and history. He held that the critical study of these basic sources was necessary before any meaningful grand syntheses could be made. Iran, with its successive great empires—those of the Achaemenids, Parthians, Sāsānids, and Muslims—its diverse faiths and its fine literary and artistic achievements, was already much more sharply focussed for the scholar than was Central Asia, but the historical geography of Iran, apart from groundwork done by such scholars as Tomaschek, had been hardly explored. As it happened, while Barthold was working on his book, two German scholars were also putting together outstanding contributions to this very subject, though from very different angles. Josef Marquart (a scholar whom Barthold felt to be to some extent a rival to himself, with their overlapping interests, and one whose wide-ranging speculations, even at times lucubrations, Barthold felt were often not sufficiently firmly grounded in reality) in his *Ērānšahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenac'i* (1901) gave a translation of a brief and jejune Armenian geographical work enriched by a commentary of amazing erudition; and Paul Schwarz was embarking on his *Iran in Mittelalter* (1896-1936), a patient synthesis of all the information available in the medieval Islamic geographers but without any attempt at interpretation. These works Barthold was able to draw upon substantially only for his additional notes, but his own book stands as a parallel, though completely independent achievement, and has the additional advantage of providing a successful blend of classical, medieval Islamic, and modern European information on his subject.

For sources, Barthold accordingly drew upon the results of a patient sifting by earlier Iranists of the classical—above all Greek—sources on Iran; and then, for the earlier Islamic centuries, upon the corpus of ninth- and tenth-century Arabic geographical texts collected by M. J. de Goeje in his *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (1870-1894), supplemented by Yāqūt's *Mu'jam al-buldān*. For the period of the Saljuqs, Mongols, Tīmūrids, and so on, he had texts by authors such as Nasawī, Juwaynī, 'Abd al-Razzāq Samarqandī, and Hāfiz-i Abrū, in the exploitation of which Barthold was often a trailblazer. For the period up to the present, for which primary historical sources in Persian or Arabic become sparser, he utilized fully the many European travelers, diplomatic envoys, merchants,

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members of religious orders, and so on who traveled within Iran, being thereby able, through the citation of such recent observers as I. N. Berezin, E. G. Browne, the Hon. G. N. Curzon, and A. V. Williams Jackson, to make his survey entirely up to date. It is not surprising that Barthold is particularly full on Khurāsān and the northeastern fringes of Iran, for Russian travelers and scholars had done much valuable spadework here for him; but the breadth of his treatment of other provinces such as Fārs and Azerbaijan shows that his mastery of the source material extended to the whole of historic Iran, including Mesopotamia, that at various epochs has formed part of the empires of Iran.

The basic sources for the medieval Islamic period have not been greatly enlarged since Barthold's time. Since it was only in 1922 that A.Z.V. Togan discovered at Mashhad a manuscript of the Arab traveler Abū Dulaf al-Khazraji's second *risāla* on his travels in northern and western Iran, Barthold was not able to draw upon this, although he was of course aware of the numerous citations from this work in Yāqūt; I have therefore added the relevant references to Minorsky's 1955 edition and translation of the *risāla*. Also, Barthold naturally knew of the anonymous Persian geographical work from the late tenth century, the *Hudūd al-'ālam*, acquired by Captain A. G. Tumanskii at Bukhara in 1893, and whose text he was later to edit and to have published posthumously (1930). But in the earlier period, he was only able to quote to a limited extent from a photographic copy, so that ampler references to the English translation and monumental commentary of Minorsky (1937) have been added by Livshits.

Finally, one should mention that a Persian translation of the *Historical Geography of Iran* was published at Tehran in 1930 by Sardādwar; it is now very hard to find,² and it may be fairly claimed that the present translation will for the first time make available to western readers one of the masterworks of a giant of oriental studies.

THE translation has been made by Dr. Svat Soucek from the text of the *Istoriko-geograficheskii obzor Irana* given in Vol. VII of Barthold's *Sochineniia* (Moscow, 1971), pp. 31-225, a volume provided with a lengthy Introduction (pp. 5-28) by Dr. V. A. Livshits. Barthold's original text is liberally sprinkled with quotations from Ar-

² My colleague, Mr. Mohsen Ashtiany, tells me that it has, however, recently been reprinted in Iran.

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abic, Persian, and Turkish sources given in the original Arabic script. These also have been translated; citations from classical Greek authors have been left in the original script.

The notes are an exceedingly valuable feature of this 1971 edition, but as translated in this present work they represent a palimpsest, as it were, of different layers by different hands. Barthold's original notes, given with the 1903 original text, were brief and largely confined to the citation of oriental texts used for the work. But as was his custom with other major works, over the years Barthold accumulated, out of his own reading and in some instances his closer personal acquaintance with the actual terrain, a rich collection of further references. Facsimile examples of Barthold's notes are given by Livshits at pp. 22-26 of his Introduction. Livshits has integrated these with the notes of the original edition (leaving them, in many cases, in their terse, elliptical, notelike form), and in the present translation, these are not otherwise distinguished; anyone who wishes to disentangle the 1903 notes from the subsequent ones can easily do so from the *Sochineniia* text. Livshits has, however, vastly increased the value of the latter text by adding his own extensive annotation, comprising in the main relevant works that appeared during the years 1930-1967. In the present translation, these are marked off by angle brackets, thus: «. . .»). The final layer is that of my own notes, references to works that have either appeared since 1967 or that were published earlier but were apparently not available to Livshits in the Soviet Union. Furthermore, references to translations of texts into western European languages, for example to Yule's translation of Marco Polo and to Le Strange's one of Clavijo's *Embassy to Tamerlane*, have been given where Barthold cited only Russian translations. These additions of my own have been placed within square brackets, thus: [. . .] when they represent insertions within or additions to existing notes. Where a few notes have been inserted at fresh points in Barthold's text, these are indicated by letters, thus: a, b, c, etc. In general, however, I have sought not to overload still further an already substantial weight of annotation.

The bibliography given at the end of this book is a select one. Volume VII of the *Sochineniia* contains a bibliography of truly gargantuan dimensions (87 pages), although this also refers, it is true, to the other contents of the volume (*Iran, a Historical Survey*, some review articles and shorter articles, and some *Encyclopaedia of Islam* articles). The system that I have adopted within the body of the translation is to give the full title and bibliographical details when

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the work in question does not appear in the bibliography. The naturally very numerous Russian works cited by Barthold are usually given by short title only and without full bibliographical details. Sergei Shuiskii has assembled a bibliography of Russian works that gives the full references; this follows the main bibliography.

For measurements and distances, Barthold wisely did not attempt to reduce the figures given in his sources to a common denominator; hence one finds metric measurements side-by-side with, for example, English miles and the traditional Russian units. The reader may therefore find it useful to note that a verst is approximately a kilometer or 3,500 English feet in length, an arshin 28 inches in length, and a desiatina 2.7 acres in area.

C. E. BOSWORTH
December 1981

AN
HISTORICAL
GEOGRAPHY OF
IRAN

INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this work is to present a brief survey of the geography of Iran, to dwell in greater detail on the sites that were at various historical periods the centers of life, and to determine, as far as possible, the degree of dependence of this life on geographical circumstances.

"Iran" as a geographical term denotes an elevated plateau, bordering on the north and northeast the basins of the Caspian and Aral seas, and on the west, south, and southeast, the basin of the Indian ocean. The country is one of the so-called interior, landlocked basins, whose characteristic peculiarities have been best described by F. Richthofen in his book on China.¹ The main difference between these basins and the ocean-drained or peripheral ones is that in the former, all the products of mechanical or chemical decomposition (through the action of water, wind, and so on) remain within the region, whereas in the latter they are carried away into the sea; in the former the accumulation of such deposits gradually effaces the unevenness of the soil and is instrumental in its leveling, whereas in the latter the deposits pile up along the coasts and further the formation of deltas and the raising of sea bottoms; the waters that pass through a country on the way to the sea erode the soil more and more, and the unevenness of the latter becomes ever more sharply pronounced. This is, then, how in closed basins the compartmentalization of the surface gradually diminishes, whereas in the peripheral ones it increases. Lack of moisture in landlocked basins, however, allows only a minor part of the country's surface to be cultivated, and this hinders a solid and lasting development of culture and civilization; for these reasons landlocked basins sharply differ from the peripheral ones not only in geography but also in history.

The Iranian plateau is one of such interior basins with an extremely dry climate.² Except in a few mountain areas, agriculture

¹ «F. Fr. von Richthofen, *China. Ergebnisse eigener Reisen und darauf gegründeter Studien* (Berlin, 1877), 1. Theil, 6-21.)»

² For the absence of change in the climate during the last millennium, cf. W. Tomaschek, "Zur historischen Topographie, II," pp. 561-62; Polybius, X, 28, 3 cited by L. S. Berg, "Ob izmeneniakh klimata v istoricheskuiu epokhu," *Zemlevedenie* (1911), book III, p. 80.

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is possible here only through irrigation; for this reason all the rivers, except for the most important ones, are divided up into irrigation canals as soon as they leave the mountains. Their remaining waters disappear in the sands. Civilization is of necessity concentrated along the fringes of the mountains that cut through the plateau. For these same reasons, the geographical borders of Iran could not coincide with the political and ethnic ones. The fact that almost the entire interior of the country is unsuitable for sedentary civilization could not but force the Iranians to settle areas neighboring the oceanic and Aralo-Caspian basins. The easternmost branch of the Iranians, the Afghans, now live chiefly in the basin of the Indus, whereas the westernmost one, the Kurds, live in that of the Tigris.³ These were the approximate limits within which lived the historical Iranians,⁴ as a result of which F. Spiegel, the author of a voluminous (now already somewhat dated) work on Iran, considered it possible to give his book the following title: *Érân, das Land zwischen dem Indus und Tigris*.

In the ethnic sense, the term "Iranians," as is well known, denotes that branch of the Aryans who are closely related to those of India. The oldest monuments of Indian and Iranian literatures are linguistically so similar that an attempt has even been made to reconstruct, in general terms, the language spoken by the proto-historical common ancestors of the Iranians and Indians. H. Oldenberg in his book *Aus Indien und Iran* remarks that "we can trace down to individual details the processes through which that language, not a single word of which has been preserved by history, developed to the southeast of the Hindu Kush into the dialect of the Vedas, and to the southwest of these same mountains into that of the Avesta."⁵ Of the two branches of the Asian Aryans—the Indians and Iranians—the Indians received their ethnic characteristics, it would seem, only in the country on that side of the Hindu Kush: there are no traces of Indians inhabiting the area to the north of these mountains. On the other hand, the Iranians, in the opinion of today's scholars, had at one time occupied a considerable portion of southern Russia and all of Turkestan, both western, present-day Russian, Turkestan and eastern Turkestan, that is, the Tarim

³ «For the present-day limits of the spread of the Iranian languages, see Oranskii, *Vvedenie*, p. 288.»

⁴ In the *Kutāb al-Fihrist*, ed. G. Flügel, I, 18², Sughd was called *Īrān al-A'lā*, "Upper Iran"; see Ross-Gauthiot, "De l'alphabet soghdien," *JA*, ser. 10, vol. XVII (1911), 532.

⁵ «H. Oldenberg, *Aus Indien und Iran* (Berlin, 1899), pp. 137-38.»

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basin. The languages spoken in this entire area already had the characteristic features of the Iranian idiom, not those of the proto-historical Indo-Iranian tongue. Both this fact and the few historical data available to us—the latter partly set out in F. A. Braun's magisterial dissertation *Razyskaniia v oblasti goto-slavianskikh otnoshenii* ["Researches in the Field of Gotho-Slavic Relations"]⁶—make us suppose that the movement of the Iranians, after their separation from the Indians, proceeded from east to west rather than vice versa; the Iranians migrated into present-day Persia, most probably, also from the east,⁷ and prior to their irruption there they reached a certain degree of cultural development in regions included today within the borders of Afghanistan. Here, in the basin of the Āmū Daryā and of other rivers that flow from the high mountain ranges that constitute that eastern limit of the Iranian plateau, the conditions of irrigation are somewhat more propitious than in the western part of Iran, for the high snow-clad mountain crests give rise to vigorous rivers. The traveler Ferrier, who in the years 1845-1846 crossed Persia and Afghanistan, states that through the area from Kermanshah, the principal town of Persian Kurdistan, to the Harī Rūd river, which represents the border of Persia and Afghanistan, he had to cross only brooks (*ruisseaux*); the Harī Rūd was the first river "à laquelle on puisse donner le nom de rivière."⁸ According to Ferrier again, the Hilmand is the only water course in the entire area from the Tigris to the Indus that deserves the appellation of a full-fledged river (*fleuve*).⁹

⁶ F. A. Braun, *Razyskaniia v oblasti goto-slavianskikh otnoshenii. I. Goty i ikh sosedi do V veka. Pervyi period: Goty na Visle* (Saint Petersburg, 1899), pp. 77, 90, 96 (*Sbornik ORIAS* = *Otdelenie russkogo iazyka i slovesnosti Imp. Akademii nauk*, vol. XIV, no. 12).

⁷ «For the possible routes of the movement of Iranian tribes into the territory of the Iranian plateau, see R. Ghirshman, *L'Iran des origines à l'Islam* (Paris, 1951), pp. 58 ff.; I. D'iakonov, *Istoriia Mīdu*, pp. 124-125, 1249-50; E. A. Grantovskii, "Drevneiranskoe etnicheskoe nazvanie "Parsava-Parsa," in *Kratkie soobshchennia Instituta narodov Azii AN SSSR*, fasc. XXX (1961), pp. 3-19; V. I. Abaev, *Shifo-evropeiskie izoglosy na styke Vostoka i Zapada* (Moscow, 1961), pp. 122-24; M. Mayrhofer, *Die Indo-Arier im alten Vorderasien (mit einer analytischen Bibliographie)* (Wiesbaden, 1966); V. M. Masson, *Srednuaia Azia i Drevnii Vostok* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1964), pp. 395-449.»

⁸ *Voyages*, I, 269.

⁹ For the link between the lack of water and the absence of snow-clad mountains, see letter from A. D. Kalmykov.

CHAPTER II

Marw and the Course of the Murghāb

ON the west, Gūzgān was bounded by the cultivated tract of the Murghāb and its affluents, the ancient Margiana. As the largest river in the whole area, the Murghāb flows much farther north than the neighboring streams, but a part of its course crosses a sand desert; elsewhere the cultivated zone astride it is only a narrow belt. For this reason the road between the two largest cities of Arab Khurāsān, Marw and Balkh, left Marw first in a southerly direction along the Murghāb toward the mountains, then proceeded along these mountains northeastward through Fāryāb (that is, Dawlatābād) and Shapūrgān.¹ In the eastern part of the Murghāb basin was the city of Ṭālaqān, which lay at an equal distance (three days' journey) from Marw al-Rūd, situated on the Murghāb, and Fāryāb, that is, Dawlatābād.

The problem of the location of Marw al-Rūd and Ṭālaqān remains unsolved. The question of whether Marw al-Rūd was on the site of modern Marūchak or further south, on the site of Bālā Murghāb, has not been adequately answered to this day.² The data that the Arab geographers give in their itineraries seem to speak in favor of Bālā Murghāb. From among the points along this route, the castle of al-Aḥnaf b. Qays (whence a direct road left the Murghāb toward Balkh) could have stood on the site of the small Türkmen settlement of Qaraul-khāna near the confluence of the small river

¹ Nāṣir-i Khusraw (*Safar-nāma*, Tehran lithogr., p. 6) about the journey from Shapūrgān to Marw al-Rūd: "I spent the night in the village of Bādyāb [read Fāryāb? in Schefer's ed., p. 3, Bāryāb] and from there I went by way of Sanglān and Ṭālaqān to Marw al-Rūd." In the same work, p. 257, the return journey. From Sarakhs to Marw al-Rūd: "By way of the Ja'farī ribāṭ and the 'Umrawī [sic] ribāṭ and the Ni'matī ribāṭ, all the three of which are close to each other"; from Marw al-Rūd: "On the nineteenth of the month we arrived in Aryāb by way of Āb-i Garm." (Cf. Barthold, "Merverrud," *Soch.* III, 255 n. 22, and pp. 257-58.) The amīr of Khurāsān, Chaghri Beg, on the trip from Shapūrgān to his capital Marw: "We went, because of the insecurity of the road[s], toward Sanglān, and from there we came to Balkh by way of Sih-dara." *Ibid.*, p. 258: "Ribāṭ-i Sih-dara, from there to Dastgird."

² Article about Marw al-Rūd, ZVORAO, XIV (Barthold, "Merverrud"; see also Mir Hussein, "Merve Rud," *Afghanistan*, IX (1954), no. 3, pp. 8-17; no. 4, pp. 19-25.) [Bosworth, *ET*, art. "Marw al-Rūd."]

Qal'a Walī with the Murghāb;³ nearby are several mounds with fragments of fired bricks and other traces of buildings.⁴ Six miles above Bālā Murghāb was the entrance to the fourteen-mile-long defile,⁵ probably the same as the one mentioned by the geographer Qudāma.⁶ Near both its northern and southern entrances there are, on top of the cliffs, ancient stone towers guarding the passage; the northern tower is probably identical with the "castle of 'Amr" of the Arab geographers. Qudāma's statement that the entrance into the defile is at a distance of one farsakh from Marw al-Rūd speaks in favor of Bālā Murghāb and against Marūchak. Insofar as one can judge from Yate's description, there is no defile on the road from Marūchak to Qaraul-khāna;⁷ the road proceeds along the right bank of the river by the foothills, and twice cuts through the latter's ridge.⁸ Another argument in favor of this identification, less substantial but not without value, is the following: Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī says that Marw al-Rūd was in his time called Murghāb;⁹ Marūchak, as far as is known, never had this name. At the same time, Bālā Murghāb was sometimes called simply Murghāb; this is what the traveler Ferrier still called it in 1845.¹⁰ Qudāma mentions cave dwellings in this area, and there are even today many caves in the cliffs of the Murghāb valley. Some of these on the left bank were examined by Yate, who, however, found nothing of interest there;¹¹ according to him, there is today nothing in these caves that would allow us to form an idea about the way of life of their

³ The castle of Aḥnaf, according to Yāqūt (*Mu'jam*, IV, iv, p. 108) was first called Sinuwān; see also III, p. 170, where it is also added: "and that fortress was called Ḥiṣn al-Aḥnaf, it is [the same one called] Sawānjard." In Balādhurī, we read about the *rustāq* (district) of Aḥnaf (p. 406) that it is called (*yud'ā bi-*) *Shaqq al-Juradh*. The road to Marw al-Rūd; details about military events; Aḥnaf is between the Murghāb and the mountains (*min dākhil al-shu'b*); the Murghāb is on the right side, the mountains on the left. Balādhurī's idea (p. 406) about the Murghāb: "The Murghāb is a river that flows by Marw al-Rūd, then it disappears under the sands, then it emerges in Marw al-Shāhijān."

⁴ Yate, *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 122.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 219; Darband pass, northern entrance—Band-i Joukar, where the Firūzkūhīs place the limit of their yurt; near the southern entrance is the bridge to Band-i Kilrekta. (Cf. Barthold, "Merverrud," *Soch.* III, 254.)

⁶ Qudāma, tr., p. 161.

⁷ (Cf. Barthold, "Merverrud," *Soch.* III, 254 n. 15.)

⁸ Yate, *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 121.

⁹ Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī, I, 311.

¹⁰ *Voyages*, I, 368.

¹¹ *Northern Afghanistan*, pp. 222-23.

inhabitants.¹² Examined in greater detail were the caves of another locality on the Murghāb, namely, near Panjdih within the Russian border; these caves were described by the English captain F. de Laessoë, who also provided a plan.¹³ They are dug out of a sandstone mountain in two stories; the lower level consists of a corridor with a row of cells on each side, approximately identical in size, with a well in each; on the upper floor there was three more cells. No inscriptions were found anywhere; the caves of the lower floor were found entirely empty, but they were so well preserved as to give the impression that they had been vacated just recently.

After leaving the defile, the road was said to proceed upstream along the Murghāb and then again northward along one of the side valleys, across the ridge of Tīrband-i Turkistān and along the valleys of the rivers Qara Jangal and Qal'a Walī. Ṭālaqān was situated, according to Iṣṭakhrī,¹⁴ in a mountainous place, and according to Ya'qūbī (who, incidentally, had very vague notions about these regions), between two large mountains;¹⁵ it could have lain either near the fortress of Takht-i Khātūn or on the site of the old fortress of Kaurmakh at the southern edge of the Qal'a Walī valley. Kaurmakh was until the middle of the nineteenth century the main fortress of the latest inhabitants of the country, the Jamshīds. If the citadel of Ṭālaqān stood here, the town itself could have occupied the area down to the Qal'a Walī river; the mounds mentioned by Yate in his description of this locality could have been part of it.¹⁶ The citadel of Ṭālaqān is mentioned under the name of Nuṣrat Kūh in connection with Chingiz Khan's campaigns; it defended itself for half a year against the Mongol army.¹⁷ In the ninth century, Ṭālaqān was so large that it had two Friday mosques; it was famous for its woolen fabrics.¹⁸

The mountainous region on the upper reaches of the Murghāb was called Gharch, Gharj, Gharchistān, or Gharshistān, and its inhabitants were called Gharcha. This ethnonym is still current as

¹² In A. D. Kalmykov's opinion (letter of 3 December 1905), the caves are clearly unsuitable for habitation (they are not located along the exterior ravine but burrow into the depth), but they could serve as a burial ground, although there are no traces of graves. The entrance was not camouflaged.

¹³ "Caves and ruins at Penjdeh," *PRGS*, n.s. VII (1885), 584-88.

¹⁴ Iṣṭakhrī, p. 270.

¹⁵ *Kutāb al-Buldān*, p. 287.

¹⁶ *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 211.

¹⁷ «The siege of Nuṣrat Kūh lasted, according to Ibn al-Athīr, ten months, and according to Rashīd al-Dīn, seven. Cf. Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 439.»

¹⁸ Ya'qūbī, *Kutāb al-Buldān*, p. 287.

Ghalcha, and it is used in Central Asia to designate the Aryan population of the mountainous region along the upper reaches of the Āmū Daryā. This term, in Tomaschek's opinion, goes back to the ancient Bactrian word *ghar*, "mountain";¹⁹ that the word is the same in both cases is, moreover, evident from the fact that the term Gharjistān was also applied to the mountainous region of the upper Zarafshān; the twelfth-century author Sam'ānī says about one village that it was situated in the "Gharjistān of Samarqand."²⁰ The region under discussion here, Murghāb Gharjistān, had its own rulers whose title was *shār*; Iṣṭakhrī²¹ and Ibn Ḥawqal²² name two principal towns of the region, of which one, Pishīn [Bāshīn] (Afshīn in Jūzjānī) lay on the eastern, right bank of the Murghāb, at a distance of one day's journey above Diza (the village of Diza was situated at the southern end of the above-mentioned defile);²³ the other, Shūrmīn, was in the mountains, one day's journey southward from the former. Islam had already spread into Gharjistān by the tenth century, but the local princes retained their rule; at the end of the tenth century, even Marw al-Rūd was within their domains.²⁴ This local dynasty was liquidated in the eleventh century by Maḥmūd of Ghazna.^a

The character of the country along the Murghāb is now quite different from what it was in the time of the Arab geographers. Yate draws attention to the fact that the Arab geographers speak of the orchards of Marw al-Rūd,²⁵ whereas today there are in neither Marūchak nor Bālā Murghāb either trees or even bushes.²⁶ The nomadic inhabitants of the area, the Aryan Jamshīds and the

¹⁹ «For the term *galcha*, see also Barthold, "Tadzhiki," *Soch.* II/1, 458. The word *ghar*- ("mountain," Avestan *garay*-, *gairi*-), is represented in eastern Iranian languages; however, in the monuments of the pre-Islamic period the ethnonym **gharchak* or **gharchuk* is not attested (in Soghdian *ghrtsyk* = "mountain-," "mountain-eer").»

²⁰ Barthold, *Turkestan*, p. 131. Cf. Also Marquart, "Beiträge," p. 666.

²¹ Iṣṭakhrī, p. 271-72.

²² Ibn Ḥawqal, p. 323.

²³ «For the two halves of the village of Diza (Dizak)—the upper one above Marw al-Rūd, and the lower one—see Barthold, "Merverrud," *Soch.* III, 254; Barthold, *Oroshenie*, *Soch.* III, 144.»

²⁴ Maqdisī, p. 314 [See on the region, R. N. Frye, *EP*, art. "Ghardjistan."]

^a Muḥammad Nāẓim, *The Life and Times of Sultān Maḥmūd of Ghazna* (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 60-62.

²⁵ *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 224.

²⁶ According to Kalmykov's letter of 3 December 1905, the Türkmens today do have orchards from Takhta-bāzār to Russian Marūchak (two versts from Afghan Marūchak).

Turkish Türkmens, pay equally little attention to fruit growing, an occupation that demands even greater sacrifices than does agriculture from people who are not inclined to a sedentary way of life in the first place.²⁷

There has never been an uninterrupted zone of cultivation along the Murghāb; this is by reason of high sandstone cliffs that sometimes, especially along the right bank, go all the way to the river and break up its valley into separate segments. The Marūchak valley ends three English miles north of the present-day fortress at a place where the bluffs reach the river on both sides.²⁸ The next oasis on the Murghāb, Panjdih, literally "five villages" (a name distorted by the Türkmens as Pendi), represents, according to Yate's description, a long, narrow valley extending over a distance of twenty-five miles with an average width of two miles.²⁹ The ruins of a large town, according to de Lassoë, are visible to the south of the village of Old Panjdih.³⁰ There are more ruins on the right bank, opposite Old Panjdih and further downstream. Panjdih is called by this name for the first time, so far as is known, by Yāqūt at the beginning of the thirteenth century.³¹ By Tīmūr's time, the Türkmens had already changed this Persian name to Pendi.³² At the present time, the number of cultivated fields in the valley of Panjdih is extremely small; Yates observes that the valley cannot feed its population,

²⁷ «For the Türkmens' irrigation of the Murghāb basin in the nineteenth century, see *Materialy po zemlevodopol'zovaniu*, pp. 63-185. For the origin of the Jamshīds, see below, p. 48 and note 4. For the ethnogenesis of the Türkmens, see Barthold, "Ocherk istorii turkmenskogo naroda"; A. Ia. Iakubovskii, "Voprosy etnogeneza turkmen, VIII-X vv.," *SE* (1947), no. 3, pp. 48-54; *Ist. Turkmenskoi SSR*, I.)»

²⁸ The distances, according to Yate: Tāsh-kurgan—Karaul-khane, 10 miles; Karaul-khane—Marūchak, 12 miles; Khauz-i Khān—Rabāt-i Kāshān, 35 miles; Khauz-i Khān—Kala-i Maur, 15 miles; Old Penje—Sarī Yazī, 35 miles; Ak-tepe—Kurbān-i Niyāz, 13 miles; Bend-i Nādir—Pul-i Khishtī, approx. 10 miles; Marūchak—Takhta-bāzār, approx. 12 miles. «Cf. Barthold, *Oroshenie*, *Soch.* III, 144-45, 151. For reports by the Arab geographers about the routes in the Murghāb basin, see Barthold, "Merverrud," *Soch.* III, 253 ff.)»

²⁹ *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 184.

³⁰ "Caves and Ruins of Penjeh," *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, n.s. VII (1885), 583-91.

³¹ V. A. Zhukovskii, *Razvalny starogo Merva*, p. 40. Panjdih already in Nāṣir-i Khusraw, eleventh century (*Safar-nāma* [Tehran lithogr.], p. 4; Schefer's ed., p. 2: Panjdih-i Marw al-Rūd.) Ḥamd Allāh Mustawfi Qazwīnī ascribes the foundation of Panjdih to Malikshāh.

³² Sharaf al-Dīn Yazdī, I, 353. Irrigation works under Tīmūr; for works carried out under Nādir Shāh, see in the article about the manuscript of Muḥammad Kāzīm (Barthold, "O nekotorykh vostochnykh rukopisiakh," *Soch.* VIII, 347-48).

and until the fixing of the border in 1885, grain was brought here from Maymana.³³ The main settlement of the area today is Takhta Bāzār, a Russian border point whither the Afghan amīr used to allow his subjects to go for the purpose of trade. The railway does not reach this place, but goes only to the brick bridge (Pul-i Khishtī in Persian, Tāsh Köprü in Turkish) on the Kūshk not far from the confluence of this stream with the Murghāb,³⁴ and then proceeds along the valley of the Kūshk to the Afghan border.

The cultivated zone of Panjdih is separated from that of Marw by a sand desert, a situation that we find to have existed even in the ninth and tenth centuries. The northernmost limit of the cultivated zone of Panjdih today is considered to be the site of Sarī Yazī, now a railway station. Clayey promontories and hills of hard sandstone continue for about seventy versts further, down to the post station of Charwakh. The southernmost point connected to Marw was in the Middle Ages considered to be the village of Qarīnayn, some twenty-five farsakhs from Marw; its proper name was Barkdiz, and it received the Arabic nickname of Qarīnayn ("Two Friends") because it used to be attributed now to Marw, now to Marw al-Rūd. The village lay on a high bluff above the river; there were no cultivated fields here, and the inhabitants, who were fire-worshippers, earned their living by hiring out their donkeys to travelers. V. A. Zhukovskii, probably correctly, identifies Qarīnayn with the present site of Imām Bābā, some thirty versts below Sarī Yazī, where there is on a high bluff an old caravanserai, and at its foot an old Muslim cemetery.³⁵ Besides Qarīnayn, the few other sites that in the tenth century were strung along the Murghāb further downstream consisted only of post stations and caravanserais;³⁶ even the second stage on the road from Marw to Marw al-Rūd, namely, the tract of six farsakhs between the village of Faz (situated at a distance of seven farsakhs from Marw) and that of Mahdiābād was said to pass through the desert.³⁷ At present, Zhukovskii writes, "there is here the most excellent postal road, which is crossed by old deep canals and a mass of irrigation ditches, and which passes along fields planted with jugara (sorghum) and melons and is studded

³³ *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 189.

³⁴ «For this bridge see also Barthold, *Oroshenie*, *Soch.* III, 151; *idem*, "O nekotorykh vostochnykh rukopisiakh," p. 929.»

³⁵ *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 181.

³⁶ «For the villages between Marw and Marw al-Rūd, see K. A. Adykov, "Doroga."»

³⁷ Qudāma, text, p. 209; tr., p. 160.

with whole forests of tamarisks."³⁸ The old irrigation ditches pertain to a later period than that of the Arab geographers, perhaps to the period of Marw's prosperity under the Saljūqs in the twelfth century or to the time of its restoration under the Tīmūrīds in the fifteenth.³⁹ The latter is more likely: the Harāt historian Isfizārī wrote in 1492 that under the reign of Sulṭān Ḥusayn (who ascended the throne in 1469), thanks to newly dug canals, the zone under cultivation both between Bālā Murghāb and Marw and between Marw and Sarakhs was considerably expanded. He further claims that in both areas formerly barren lands became fully irrigated and cultivated, so that continuous belts of cultivation were formed between the above-mentioned towns. This, however, is hardly plausible.⁴⁰

Marw and its oasis is so far the only region of Central Asia about which we have a detailed historical-geographical study, namely, the excellent work of Zhukovskii, *The Ruins of Old Marw*.⁴¹

The city of Marw lay throughout the Middle Ages in the eastern part of the oasis; its existence was closely linked to that of a dam which is today called Sulṭān Band, and which was recently restored. The dam is first mentioned in the tenth century; it was several times destroyed, sometimes by the waters of the Murghāb, sometimes by conquerors who wanted to force the city to surrender by depriving it of water.⁴² Halfway between the dam and the city was the village of Zarq,⁴³ where the large canal branched out into smaller ones; here stood the watermill where Yazdigird III, the last Sāsānid, was killed. Zhukovskii locates this village at the site of the ruins of Türkmen Kala. The city of Marw itself, as Zhukovskii has proved, gradually moved westward. The earliest part was at the site of Giaur

³⁸ *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 175.

³⁹ «(For irrigation works done under the Saljuqs in some areas of the Murghāb basin (especially in the Pendi oasis), see Barthold, *Oroshenie*, Soch. III, 149 ff.)»

⁴⁰ Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 71. For a continuous cultivated belt between Marw and Sarakhs, see Barthold, *Oroshenie*, p. 66; *ibid.* for the Khīwan narrative about Kucha Kumi (Soch. III, 152).

⁴¹ «(See also Barthold, "K istorii Merva"; *idem*, "Po povodu"; for the works of Soviet archaeologists investigating Marw, see M. Masson, "Novye dannye"; *idem*, "Kratkaia khronika"; G. A. Pugachenkova, *Puti razvitiia arkhitektury Iuzhnogo Turkmenistana pory rabovladieniia i feodalizma* (Moscow, 1958), *Trudy IUTAKÈ*, VI, 191 (plan of eleventh- to twelfth-century Marw); *Trudy IUTAKÈ*, XI (1962); XII (1963); XIII (1966); Koshelenko, *Kul'tura Parfi*, pp. 76-97.)»

⁴² Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, pp. 174-75.

⁴³ Or Rāziq, see Barthold, *Oroshenie*, Soch. III, 141 n. 24.

Kala.⁴⁴ As Zhukovskii has further shown, Giaur Kala is to be identified with the *shahristān*, the inner city of tenth-century Marw. Together with the suburbs, the city occupied an area of some forty square versts. In the tenth century, when Khurāsān and Māwarānnahr were united under the rule of one dynasty, Marw lost its military importance, and its citadel had already been ruined.⁴⁵ The *shahristān* had four gates; Zhukovskii places them in the western and eastern walls, in conformity with the location of the gates in later townships. However, in other large cities of Central Asia (Balkh, Harāt, Samarqand) where the *shahristān* had four gates, the latter were situated at the four cardinal points, and there is hardly any reason for assuming that a different situation existed in Marw; for it was precisely here that four roads intersected, namely, those to Sarakhs, Khwārazm, Bukhārā, and Marw al-Rūd.⁴⁶

There also seem to have been ruins to the north and northeast; they were called "Old Marw" and were covered with sand; even in the fifteenth century, the author Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū relates, there would sometimes appear, when strong winds scattered the sand, traces of walls and other structures.⁴⁷

West of the site of Giaur Kala there was another, Sultān Kala; in the very center of the inner square are the ruins of a large dome-shaped building, the mausoleum of Sultān Sanjar.⁴⁸ The site of Sultān Kala corresponds to Marw of the Saljuq period, which had a wall built by Sultān Malikshāh. The tall building is the mausoleum of Sultān Sanjar, who died in 1157; the mausoleum was built by this monarch in his lifetime, and even at the end of the thirteenth century, according to the historian Rashīd al-Dīn, it was considered to be the tallest Islamic building in the world.⁴⁹

Marw was destroyed by the Mongols in 1221; Zhukovskii pro-

⁴⁴ Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, pp. 111 ff.

⁴⁵ «(For the Marw citadel, already destroyed, it would seem, in the second half of the eighth century (Bulgakov, "Iz arabskikh istochnikov o Merve," pp. 219-20), see Usmanova, "Ērk-kala"; Koshelenko, *Kul'tura Parfi*, p. 77.)»

⁴⁶ There was no gate on the southern side: see Barthold, "K istorii Merva," *Soch.* IV, 178; for a different opinion, see Pugachenkova, *Puti razvitiia*, p. 191.

⁴⁷ In Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, pp. 64, 66; in the excerpt from Ḥāfiẓ-i Abrū it is mentioned that the dam called "Old Marw" was built *bi-dih-i 'Andaq*; cf. Zhukovskii's conclusion (*ibid.*, pp. 35, 67) about the identity of 'Andaq with the Andaq of Sam'ānī and Yāqūt, that is, a village two or three farsakhs from Marw, in the sands (cf. *ibid.*, p. 47, after Sam'ānī).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 119 ff.

⁴⁹ M. C. D'Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-Khan jusqu'à Timour bey ou Tamerlan* (The Hague and Amsterdam, 1834-1835), IV, 273.

poses the hypothesis⁵⁰ that the Mongol camp was placed on the present site of Shaim Kala (to the southeast of Giaur Kala).⁵¹ Marw was rebuilt in 1409 by Shāhrukh, Timūr's son, in a new location; the remains of this town appear to be two sites connected with each other, Bayram 'Alī and 'Abdullāh Khānī, but considerably smaller than the former sites.⁵²

Zhukovskii also gathered information about the villages of the Marw oasis. From the result of his research it is evident that in the Middle Ages, just as now, the oasis occupied a very modest area in all directions from the city. We have already discussed the southern limit of the oasis. On the northeast, there was a road from Marw to Bukhārā, on which the village of Kushmayhan, now Kishman, was reached after five farsakhs; the sands began here, and for the rest of this road all the way to the banks of the Āmū Daryā only postal stations are mentioned. To the left of this road, at a distance of one farsakh from Kushmayhan and five farsakhs from Marw, was the village of Hurmuzfarrah, whose name was later shortened to Musfara; here passed the road to Khwārazm, also across sands that began immediately after this village. The road to Sarakhs went southwestward; several points are mentioned along it, but even the second, namely, the fortress of Dandānqān, ten farsakhs from Marw, is described as standing in the middle of the desert; the fortress itself occupied only an area of five hundred paces, and beside it was the halting place for caravans.⁵³

The isolated position of Marw and the proximity of the desert subjected its trade to constant danger; only in rare periods of strong government was it possible to shield the oasis from the raids of the nomads. This has been used to explain the decline of the city, which was originally situated on the main route from western to eastern Asia. As early as in the third century B.C., Antiochus Soter (280-261 B.C.) founded here the city of Antiochia, and surrounded the whole oasis with a wall 1,500 stadia, or forty miles, long;⁵⁴ Zhu-

⁵⁰ *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 173.

⁵¹ Cf. Barthold, "K istorii Merva," *Soch.* IV, 189 and n. 108.

⁵² The side of 'Abdullāh-khānī: 300 fathoms; the surface, 37½ desiatinas; the sides of Bayram 'Alī, 375 and 250 fathoms, its surface, 39⅓ desiatinas.

⁵³ Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, pp. 21-22. [Dandānqān's great claim to fame lies in the fact that it was the site in 1040 of the historic battle between Sultan Mas'ūd b. Maḥmūd of Ghazna's army and the Oghuz invaders of Khurāsān led by the Saljuq family, the defeat of the former leading to the total loss of the Ghaznawid lands in the west; see Bosworth, *EP² Suppl.*, art. "Dandānqān."]

⁵⁴ «For the remains of this wall, see S. A. Viazigin, "Stena Antiokha Sotera."» [R. N. Frye, "The Sasanian System of Walls for Defense," *Studies in Memory of Gaston Wiet*, ed. Miriam Rosen-Ayalon (Jerusalem, 1977), p. 14.]

kovskii argues on this basis that the oasis at that time covered approximately the same area as now.⁵⁵ The incursions of nomads must have caused a decline in Marw's commercial importance.⁵⁶ Isidore of Charax, who wrote around the beginning of our era, does not mention a road through Marw to the Āmū Daryā; the trade route described by him reached the Murghāb (probably near the later Marw al-Rūd), whence it turned southward toward present-day Harāt. On the place of Marw al-Rūd, in Zhukovskii's opinion, was the city of Alexandria in Margiana, founded by Alexander the Great. There are no records about Marw in the Sāsānid period except for the brief remark of a seventh-century Syriac author quoted by Zhukovskii.⁵⁷ According to this report, the oasis was at that time surrounded by a wall twelve farsakhs in circuit. The Arab governors of Khurāsān usually resided in Marw; as Zhukovskii correctly remarks, "it was the natural base from which the Arabs spread their rule into the depths of Turkeṣtān."⁵⁸

A certain decline of the city is noticeable following the time when the Tāhirids moved the capital of Khurāsān to Nīshāpūr, which then remained the chief city of that province down to the Mongol invasions, despite the fact that Sulṭān Sanjar lived in Marw in the twelfth century;⁵⁹ even then, however, the main trade route passed through Marw. According to the description by the ninth- and tenth-century Arab geographers beginning with Ibn Khurradādhbih, this road, departing from Baghdad, went through Hamadān and Ray to Nīshāpūr and from there through Sarakhs to Marw. There it bifurcated: one branch proceeded northeastward to Bukhārā and Samarqand, the other southeastward to Marw al-Rūd and Balkh. Only the Sāmānids succeeded in establishing security and order in the country. Up to the time of their rule in the ninth

⁵⁵ Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁶ Cf. Gutschmid, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 29, for the destruction of Antiochia in Margiana by the barbarians (after Pliny).

⁵⁷ *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 8. Marw is mentioned only in the Sāsānid inscriptions of the third century, in Manichaean texts and on Sāsānid coins. In the Middle Persian work *The Cities of Ērān-shahr*, the only thing mentioned in regard to Marw is that it was founded by Alexander; the foundation of Marw al-Rūd is ascribed in this text to Bahrām Gūr; see J. Markwart, *A Catalogue of the Provincial Capitals of Ērānshahr*, ed. G. Messina (Rome, 1931), pp. 11, 44, 45. A. Yu. Yakubovskii-Bosworth, *EP*, art. "Marw al-Shāhidjān."

⁵⁸ *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 10.

⁵⁹ For the rebuilding of the walls of Sulṭān-kale in the period between the end of eleventh century and the Mongol invasion of 1221, see Barthold, "K istorii Merva," *Soch.* IV, 187.

century, according to the geographer Ya'qūbī, each station on the road from Sarakhs to Marw through the desert had a fortification, in which the inhabitants could defend themselves against the Turks, who often attacked one or another of these stations.⁶⁰

In 1221, Marw was destroyed by the Mongols, and never recovered from this calamity. In 1250 the Mongol governor Arghun erected some structures in the villages of Razīqābād to the south of the city.⁶¹ The village of Mahan, three farsakhs from Marw, became the chief point of the oasis; in the fourteenth century, under Tīmūr, a separate Türkmen governor lived there.⁶² Linked with the decline of Marw was the rise of Harāt, also destroyed by the Mongols but already rebuilt, as we shall see below, under Chingiz Khan's successor Ögedey. Marw was restored only in 1409, but this new Marw was much smaller than the pre-Mongol city.⁶³ Harāt remained under the Tīmūrids the main city of Khurāsān and the capital of the most powerful members of the dynasty. After the foundation of the new Persian state by the Šafawids, Marw and its oasis were often subjected to attacks both by the Bukhāran and Khīwan Uzbeks and by the Türkmen vassals of the Khīwans, who gradually occupied the whole region along the Murghāb.⁶⁴ As a result of this situation, trade between Persia and Māwarānnahr took a detour via Harāt, which thus became the most important trading link in Central Asia. The rulers of Harāt, beginning with the medieval Kurt dynasty and ending with the nineteenth-century Afghan rulers, endeavored to bring under their control the entire area up to the Murghāb, including the cultivated zone along this river—sometimes not without success. In the nineteenth century, circumstances did not always favor the Afghans; in the 1830s, dur-

⁶⁰ Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, p. 14. For these stations on the trade route from Sarakhs to Marw, see Adykov, "Glavnye stantsii."

⁶¹ Barthold, *Turkestan*, part I, *Teksty*, p. 117 (Juwaynī's text).

⁶² Zhukovskii, *Razvaliny starogo Merva*, pp. 43, 53.

⁶³ «For Tīmūrid Marw, see O. V. Obel'chenko, "Gorodishcha Starogo Merva Abdulla-khan-kala i Baīram-Ali-khan-kala v svete rabot IUTAKE 1950g.," *Trudy IUTAKE*, XII (Ashkhabad, 1963), 83-168.»

⁶⁴ Campaign of the Bukhārāns in 1785; passing of Marw to the Khīwans in 1822; foundation of New Marw in 1824 near Mahan; siege of Bayram-'Alī by the Khīwans in 1847; restoration of the dam of Sulṭān-Band; complete absence of inhabitants in the valley of the Kūshk at the time of Abbott's journey, 1839-1840; falling into desolation of the area between Panjdih and Yolotan. The number of the Türkmens in the Marw oasis, according to Abbott, was 60,000; they were paying a tax to the Khan of Khīwa, up to 30,000 *tillas*. See J. Abbott, *Narrative of a Journey from Herat to Khiva, Moscow and St. Petersburg, during the late Russian Invasion of Khiva* (London, 1884), I, 18-19, 29, 31, 53 ff.; Barthold, *Oroshenie, Soch.* III, 54-156.

ing the siege of Harāt by the Persians, the Khīwans seized the valley of the Murghāb up to Panjdih and the valley of the Kūshk up to Kala-i Maur. After the 1850s, the quarrel over the ownership of the Murghāb valley continued only among the various Türkmen tribes; the tribe of the Saryks, pushed out of Marw by the Tekes, occupied Panjdih and Marūchak. In 1860, the Persian government organized an expedition against Marw, without success. More successful was the movement of the Russians from the north and of the Afghans from the south; in 1884 there occurred the simultaneous occupation of Marw by the Russians and of Bālā Murghāb, Marūchak, and Panjdih by the Afghans.⁶⁵ This caused a border dispute that almost led to war between Russia and Britain; the clash ended with the Afghans giving up Panjdih upon the insistence of the Russian government.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Yate, *Northern Afghanistan*, p. 182: The whole Marūchak valley on the right bank and two-thirds of the oasis on the left bank belong to the Afghans.

⁶⁶ A. A. Semenov's article "Ocherki iz istorii prisoedineniia vol'noi Turkmenii (1881-1885 gg.). Po arkhivnym dannym," *Turkestanskii Vedomosti* (1909), pp. 83-168; review by A. Samoilovich, "Novoe o turkmenakh." Marw taken for the first time on 3 March 1884; O'Donovan in Marw in 1881; reconciliation of Persia and Bukhārā; Alikhanov and Sokolov (Marw and the caravans in February 1882); the Afghans, their occupation of Marw at the beginning of October 1881; Khīwan governors Yūsuf Bay (died October 1882) and 'Abd al-Rahmān Bay, the latter recalled in 1883; English agents, the mysterious Siyāpūsh and his *murīds*, the deportation of him and of Qājār-Khān to European Russia, death in 1885. (For these events, see also Barthold, *Ist. kul'turnoy zhizni Turkestana*, Soch. II/1, 415; Rossua i Turkmenia v XIX veke, pp. 248 ff.; *Ist. Turkmenskoi SSR*, I/2, 127 ff.; Masson-Romodina, *Istoria Afganistana*, II, 283-88.) [On this so-called "Panjdih Incident" of 1885, see W. K. Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan, a Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia* (London, 1967), pp. 161-67.]

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